



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

DATE: September 10, 2015

AGENDA ITEM NO. 26

Consent Agenda ☐

Regular Agenda ☒

Public Hearing ☐

 **County Administrator's Signature:**

Subject:

Adoption of the 2016 State and Federal Legislative Program

Department:

County Administrator

Staff Member Responsible:

Mary Scott Hardwick, Intergovernmental Liaison

Recommended Action:

I RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS (BOARD) CONSIDER AND ADOPT THE ATTACHED 2016 STATE AND FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM.

Summary Explanation/Background:

This document captures carryover items from the Board's 2015 adopted program as well as feedback related to State and Federal Legislative issues for the 2016 Legislative Session. The proposed program is brought before the full Board for consideration, amendment and adoption. It is understood that it is not exhaustive and other issues may evolve requiring the Board's action to amend the program.

County staff and our state and federal contract lobbying firms will closely monitor the program as the legislative process progresses.

Fiscal Impact/Cost/Revenue Summary:

Not Applicable

Exhibits/Attachments Attached:

2016 Legislative Program

Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners
2016 Legislative Program

I.) State Legislative Program

A.) Priority Issues

Issue	Position
Article V Court Funding	Support eliminating the requirement that counties increase certain court expenditures by 1.5 percent over the prior county fiscal year. Support increasing the service fee charged for recording documents and instruments from \$4.00 to \$8.00, so that \$6.00 of the fee is distributed to help fund court-related technology needs. Support legislation giving counties more flexibility in the use of the funds generated by the discretionary \$65.00 cost on criminal and traffic cases
Backyard Gun Ranges	Support legislation to close the backyard gun range loophole and allow local law enforcement to prosecute individuals who dangerously discharge firearms.
Beach Nourishment	Support the continuation and increase of funding for beach nourishment projects.
Building Permits	Support legislation allowing homeowners acting as their own contractors to pull online permits for additional projects instead of having to appear in person.
Defense Contractor Incentives	Support legislation that makes incentives for defense contractors an outright reward. Currently state dollars may offset federal incentives.
Department of Juvenile Justice	Support allowing counties to pay actual detention costs on a monthly reimbursement basis. Support appropriations to cover the overbilling by DJJ, resulting in \$8 million currently owned to Pinellas County and over \$130 million owed statewide.
Energy Policy	Support the development of a statewide energy policy.
Entertainment Tax Credit Incentives	Support funding for entertainment tax credit incentives. On- location and indigenous commercial, film, and media production generates over \$25 million per year in Pinellas County.
Healthcare Expansion	Support efforts to expand healthcare in Florida and draw down federal resources to expand Medicaid eligibility.
High Impact Veteran County	Support legislation establishing a "High Impact Veteran County" designation that allocates state funds to hire Veterans Service Officers in designated counties to increase services and federal benefits for Florida veterans.
High Prescriber Database	Support legislation that requires physicians to input data into the state monitoring database rather than leaving it as a voluntary program.
Homelessness Funding	Provide a steady source of state funding for homelessness issues that is not subject to the annual appropriations process.
Low Income Pool	Support continued partnership with the federal government to provide funding for healthcare through the Low Income Pool program.
Medicaid Dental Care	Support legislation to incentivize participation by the dental community.
Medicaid Managed Care	Support continued efforts to work through Medicaid reform initiatives to ensure timely and full payment cycles for providers.
Penny for Pinellas Expansion	Support legislation allowing counties and cities the authority to include operations and maintenance in the ballot language as an allowable use of the Local Government Infrastructure Surtax.
SHIP/SAIL (Affordable Housing Trust Fund)	Oppose money from the Sadowski Affordable Housing Trust Fund being used for any purpose other than housing.

B.) Appropriations

\$6 million request for the construction, fixtures, furniture and equipment for a small business incubator. Land will be provided by the City of St. Petersburg and the County will provide matching funding from the upcoming sale of the STAR Center to help finance construction. In addition, the County will be pursuing a federal Economic Development Agency grant. The project will lead to the creation of new high-wage primary employers in the Tampa Bay area.

Support the Florida Institute for Oceanography's appropriation request for the R/V Bellows research vessel based out of St. Petersburg and utilized by universities from across the state.

C.) Monitoring Issues

Issue
Support of the Florida Association of Counties' (FAC) Agenda when not in conflict with our own.
Support of the priorities of partner agencies when aligned with County priorities.
Monitor any changes to gaming legislation, including provisions to allow slot machines at pari-mutuels.
Support funding for Pinellas County transportation projects.
Monitor any changes to the Florida Retirement System.
Support of funding for Regional Planning Councils, the Pinellas County Department of Health, the Small Business Development Center Network .
Support the indexing of the local option fuel tax.
Support legislation to revise the deadline for city and county tax increment financing (TIF) payments to community redevelopment areas (CRA) from January 1 st to 30 days after the certification of the tax rolls.
Oppose changes to sovereign immunity that would increase the cap on damages paid by local governments.
Support legislation that would reduce the nutrient load in Florida's springsheds, Oppose any springs protection legislation that would require local governments to pay up front for improvements and protection.
Monitor any changes to mental health services and support increased funding for these services.
Monitor any policy changes within AHCA (Agency for Health Care Administration), Brownfield Incentive Programs, the Department of Health.
Monitor any changes to vacation rental regulation.
Home Rule Issues
- Oppose pre-emptions of fertilizer ordinance, high prescriber moratorium, fireworks restrictions, vehicle for hire regulation, authority to levy a local business tax
- Oppose legislation that would reduce or eliminate the local air quality control contract
- Oppose any unfunded mandates that impact local government budgets and control

II.) Federal Legislative Program

A.) Priority Issues

Subject	Position
Beach Nourishment/Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA) Implementation	Monitor the implementation of WRRDA to ensure continuous authorization for Pinellas County beach nourishment projects. Support approval of funding for the construction of erosion control structures (such as permanent rock structures) that reduce nourishment frequency requirements on highly erosive beaches.
FY2016 Appropriations	Support appropriations for CDBG, HOME, Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Grants, CSBG, Corps of Engineers beach funding, COPS and Byrne JAG funding, Emergency Management Performance Grant funding.
Internet Sales Tax- Marketplace Fairness Act	Support the Marketplace Fairness Act which would authorize the states to compel remote sellers to collect sales tax at the time of a transaction.
Low Income Pool	Support continued partnership with the state government to provide funding for healthcare through the Low Income Pool program.
National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)	Monitor FEMA implementation of H.R. 3370 (The Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act). Support legislative action, policies and programs to ensure that all property owners can receive affordable flood insurance.
Offshore Drilling	Oppose efforts to increase offshore drilling.
Transportation Funding	Support a long term reauthorization of MAP-21 that provides secure funding for County transportation needs.
Waters of the United States (WOTUS)	Monitor the implementation of the WOTUS rule and its impacts on County operations.